Luella knew that meant they would change horses at a posting inn. "How long will it take us?" she asked.

"I will have to find out," Alberto Drago replied, "but I think it will take most of the day to get there."

While they were talking the cabman was waiting for instructions. Finally the courier gave him the name of an hotel. "We shall have to stay the night," he said, "and I expect like me, Miss Hanley, you will be glad of a comfortable bed."

"I will indeed!" Luella replied.

The hotel, which was in Paddington, was not particularly impressive. But it was quiet, and the bedroom into which Luella was shown was small, but clean.

Enrico was next door and after he had explored their rooms he was quite ready to lie down and go to sleep. Luella could not help thinking that if he were an English boy he would doubtless have been more obstreperous.

Once he was asleep she went downstairs to ask the proprietor if it was possible to have a bath. It certainly caused a commotion. Finally a chambermaid and the man who had carried in their luggage brought a hip-bath into the bedroom. An hour later they produced two cans of warm water. Luella could wash completely. But there was nothing to dry herself on except a small and worn Turkish towel.

After her bath there was a message from Alberto Drago inviting her to dine with him. She felt he was merely being polite. If she refused his invitation he would feel free to go out and visit some friends. She



therefore replied that she would prefer something light in her bedroom.

When the tray was brought up she found there was a thin soup and cold leg of chicken that did not look very appetising. All she really wanted was to sleep and she ate what she could. She then put the tray outside the door and got into bed.

The next thing Luella knew it was morning. Enrico was sitting on the end of her bed playing with a ball that someone had given him. Luella helped the little boy to dress. Then she put on a different gown from the one in which she had travelled yesterday. Having had a good night's sleep, she now felt ready to face the world. Even the Duke did not seem so menacing as he had before.

She took Enrico downstairs for breakfast. They found the courier already there looking drawn and tired. Luella learnt that he had stayed out late with some friends he knew in the neighbourhood.

"I have ordered a carriage," he told her. "I am afraid Signor Vecchio is going to find this trip very expensive."

"I am sure," Luella replied, "the Duke will reimburse him for anything he has expended on Enrico."

She saw an expression of doubt on Alberto Drago's face. It made her think that if the Duke was not pleased to see his son, he might not feel inclined to be generous. "When are we leaving?" she asked a little nervously.

"I could not get a carriage to take us so far until half-past twelve," the courier replied. "We would be